

May 12, 2009
Michigan House of Representatives
House Government Operations committee

RE: Senate Bills 374 and 375
History –Why – What

We appreciate being able to advocate for these proposed bills. The average citizen seldom has the opportunity to participate this closely or significantly in the Legislative process.

Our ad hoc committee to retrace the Indiana-Michigan state line grew out of interest by professional land surveyors on both sides of the line. The Ohio and Wisconsin lines have previously been resurveyed and marked by relatively permanent granite and concrete monuments. In contrast, the Indiana line has only the original monuments, the wood posts placed in the original 1827 government survey. We began searching for evidence of the original posts in 2004.

Our country has long recognized that definite location of boundaries is important for our citizens by establishing the public land survey system in 1785.

States need to know the location of their boundaries as their jurisdiction extends exactly up to their state boundary lines but not across. Currently, the location of this limit for the Michigan-Indiana boundary line is uncertain. The retracement survey will gather the records and recover evidence in the field that will allow the original 1827 location of the Mile Posts to be recovered, or re-established if lost. Our proposed legislation provides for this survey and, equally important, provides for the absolutely needed authorization by both states to have this done in an equitable process. Surveyors cannot do this without such authorization.

This legislation will: (1) Provide a permanent visible monument for each recovered or re-established Mile Post. (2) Provide a readily recoverable precise geodetic position for each Mile Post. (3) Provide easily available public records of all markers defining the Michigan/Indiana boundary.

We seek your support for this legislation.

Respectfully submitted,

Indiana/Michigan Ad hoc State Line Survey Committee
Jack N. Owens, PS, Chairman
Norman C. Caldwell, PS, Recording Secretary

